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EXAMINER

DIVINE, LUCAS

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2624

DATE MAILED: 03/14/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/922,646

Applicant(s)

SHIMIZU, MASAOKI

Examiner

Lucas Divine

Art Unit

2624

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 August 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-41 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-41 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 07 August 2001 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, **displaying the status of a function having higher priority in an emphasized manner** (see claims 4, 18, 28, 33, 39) and **display control means for executing a process of transferring the print data generated by said generating means and displaying the function status** (see claims 16, 26, 32, 27) must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Objections

2. Claims 11, 21, and 31 are objected to because of the following informalities: on page 42, line 3, processing is incorrectly spelled as “**proccessing**”. This is the same in claims 21 and 31. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

3. Claims 16 – 20, 26 – 30, and 32 – 41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Claim 16 includes the limitation **“display control means for executing a process of transferring the print data generated by said generating means and displaying the function status”** for example on pages 43 (bottom) and 44 (top). This display control means that does both displaying and network transfer has not been defined in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art what is being claimed. Claim 26 claims a method step that completes both functions, and claims 32 and 37 claim a process that completes both functions. The remaining claims are rejected for being dependent from a rejected parent limitation.

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Art Unit: 2624

4. Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 8 recites the limitation "**said storage unit**" in line 8 of page 41. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. There is no storage unit claimed previously, thus the reference to an unclaimed storage unit is unclear and indefinite.

5. Claims 13 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 13 and 23 recite the limitation "**said informing means**" for example in line 25 of page 42. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. There is no informing means claimed previously, thus the reference to an unclaimed informing means is unclear and indefinite.

6. Claims 17, 27, 33, and 38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The above claims state "**display control means is capable, based on the information acquired by said acquisition means, of the function status of the plural image processing functions on a single image by graphics, text and animation.**"

Paraphrased: "display control means is capable, ..., of the function status". Examiner does not understand what the display control means is capable of doing since it is never stated.

Therefore the claim does not particularly point out or distinctly claim what the display control means is capable of doing and is rejected for these reasons.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

7. Claims 31 – 36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. The computer program claimed is merely a set of instructions per se. Since the computer program is merely a set of instructions not embodied on a computer readable medium to realize the computer program functionality, the claimed subject matter is non-statutory. See MPEP § 2106 IV.B.1.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

8. Claims 11, 12, 14, 15, 21, 22, 24, 25, and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Yoshida et al. (US 6130757).

Regarding claim 11, Yoshida teaches **an image processing apparatus** (copying machine 1; col. 4 lines 25-29) **for executing an image processing function selected from plural image processing functions** (shown in the selection items of Figs. 18A-C, including application

Art Unit: 2624

functions such as fax, print, copy, image editing, and other examples shown in Figs. 7 and 8; col. 4 lines 30-42) **based on a print request from an information processing apparatus or an image processing request from an operation unit** (copier accepts jobs from itself and from clients such as copier 4 or pc 3; col. 9 lines 7-8), **the apparatus comprising:**

acquisition means for acquiring information indicating the function status of the plural image processing functions (in order to store the status of functions [status shown in Figs. 10 and 11] in tables in memory, the data must be acquired from the internal system, thus acquisition means for each function are inherently in each function unit that status is reported from);

management means for managing the information acquired by said acquisition means in unified manner in storage means (CPU 103 manages memory RAM 123 which holds JT, PT, and FT of Figs. 10 and 11 including the statuses of them; col. 10 lines 1-14 and col. 9 lines 63-67); **and**

control means for monitoring the change in the function status indicated by the information acquired by the acquisition means (CPU 101 is the system control means for the user that reads the tables and displays them for the user [Figs. 12, 13] and monitors the changes indicated by the acquisition means and displays them for the user; col. 11 lines 51-52) **and renewing the information stored in said storage means in response to a change in the function status** (in order to be monitored consistently 'in printing' 'waiting' statuses, the data is inherently renewed in the job tables via processors).

Regarding claim 12, which depends from claim 11, Yoshida further teaches **information means for informing said information processing apparatus of the information stored in**

Art Unit: 2624

said storage means (informing means 53 is the network controller that sends and receives information regarding print requests), **based on the print request from said information processing apparatus** (management means 103 returns information to the client [col. 1 lines 50-67] via information means 53).

Regarding claim 14, which depends from claim 11, Yoshida teaches the device to **include a print function for executing printing based on data from the information processing apparatus, a copy function and a facsimile function** (seen in Figs. 7 and 8; col. 4 lines 25-42).

Regarding claim 15, which depends from claim 11, Yoshida further teaches **printing means for printing on a sheet, wherein said printing means is used by one of the plural image processing functions** (Fig. 2, print unit PRT; col. 4 line 59).

Regarding claim 21, the apparatus elements of apparatus claim 11 perform all of the method steps of method claim 21. Therefore, method claim 21 is rejected for the same reasons as rejected apparatus claim 11 above.

Regarding claim 22, which depends from claim 21, the apparatus elements of apparatus claim 12 perform all of the method steps of method claim 22. Therefore, method claim 22 is rejected for the same reasons as rejected apparatus claim 12 above.

Regarding claim 24, which depends from claim 21, the apparatus elements of apparatus claim 14 perform all of the method steps of method claim 24. Therefore, method claim 24 is rejected for the same reasons as rejected apparatus claim 14 above.

Regarding claim 25, which depends from claim 21, the apparatus elements of apparatus claim 15 perform all of the method steps of method claim 25. Therefore, method claim 25 is rejected for the same reasons as rejected apparatus claim 15 above.

Regarding claim 31, the method steps of method claim 21 are the same as the program steps of program claim 31. Further Yoshida expressly discloses systems with processors and memories (see Fig. 4) for performing program steps. Thus, the steps of program claim 31 are rejected for the same reasons as discussed in the rejection of method claim 21.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

9. Claims 1 – 4, 6 – 10, 16 – 20, 26 – 30, and 32 – 41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dash et al. (US 6501485) and McCormick et al. (US 5706411), hereafter referred to as Dash and McCormick.

Regarding claim 1, McCormick teaches a print system (Fig. 1) composed of an image processing apparatus (20) for executing an image processing function (printing) and an information processing apparatus (10) for generating print data to be transferred to said image processing apparatus (Fig. 16 displays internal workings of queue processor in information processing apparatus including sending generated print data [print data in blocks; col. 8 line 45] to the printer), wherein:

said information processing apparatus acquires, from said image processing apparatus, information indicating the status of the image processing (get status module 1603 requests status from the printer device as shown in Fig. 16; col. 8 lines 53-59), **also**

executes a process of transferring the generated print data to said image processing apparatus (see Fig. 16, wherein the generated print data is forwarded [see arrowed lines] to the communication driver which transfers it to the printer) **and**

displays the function status image processing functions on a display unit based on the acquired information (Fig. 5 is an example of image processing function status that is displayed for the user from display psw 1602 [Fig. 16] based on the acquired status sent from 1603 to 1602).

While McCormick teaches a system for reporting status of print jobs, McCormick does not specifically teach the printer device being **multi-functional**, and therefore does not teach **reporting status on multiple functions**.

Dash teaches a **multi-functional device** (col. 2 lines 62-65) **that plural image processing functions can be completed on** (print, fax, copy – see Figs. 8 and 9, where copy and fax functions are demonstrated). Dash further teaches **reporting the status on the plurality of functions** (Figs. 7 and 12).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that improving the functionality of the simple printer of McCormick to the multi-functional device of Dash. The motivations for doing so would have been to allow the user to perform fax, scan, and copy functionality. If the multi-functional device of Dash were used in the system of McCormick, the

Art Unit: 2624

detailed status reporting of all functions would be needed to provide the user with status, which is a key feature of both McCormick and Dash.

Regarding claim 2, which depends from claim 1, the combination further teaches that **information processing apparatus displays the function status of the plural image processing functions in a single image, based on the acquired information** (Fig. 7 of Dash shows displaying the function status of the functions in a single image, which would be displayed by the display psw as combined in the system of McCormick).

Regarding claim 3, which depends from claim 1, McCormick further teaches the **information processing apparatus is adapted to display, on the display unit, that the generated print data are being transferred to said image processing apparatus** (Fig. 6, where it is shown that 2 pages are still at the client and are still being transferred to the printer and details the print job throughout the process [see also Fig. 5]).

Regarding claim 4, which depends from claim 1, the combination further teaches **discriminating, based on the acquired information, whether an image processing function of higher priority is executed in said image processing apparatus** (Fig. 7 of Dash shows displaying priority values and Fig. 14 shows a discrimination step [middle step far left] that tests the new status information priority vs. old status information priority for jobs) **and, in case of a discrimination that a processing function of higher priority is executed, displays the function status of the image processing function of such high priority in an emphasized manner** (in the case that a new function has higher priority, the steps in the lower left of Fig. 14 teach to display based on priority, thus displaying the items with higher priority emphasized compared to other jobs [higher on the list for example]).

Regarding claim 6, which depends from claim 1, McCormick teaches **said information processing apparatus acquires, from said image processing apparatus, the information indicating the function status of the image processing functions, for every transfer of the print data of a page** (Fig. 6, where it is shown that 2 pages are still at the client and thus displays the status throughout the sending of the job, including at each page [see also Fig. 5]) which would apply to the **plural functions** in the combined system.

Regarding claim 7, which depends from claim 1, McCormick teaches that the multi-functional unit disclosed **acquires information indicating the function status of the plural image processing functions** (must be acquired in order to display as in Fig. 7), **manages the acquired information in unified manner** (managed in a database; col. 7 lines 33-36) **in a storage unit** (Memory 74 of Fig. 3), **and renews the information stored in said storage unit in response to a change in the function status** (Fig. 7 shows the job status wherein the status is suggested to be renewed consistently because of the 'printing' designation that is renewed as different statuses change).

Regarding claim 8, which depends from claim 1, a reading suggests the undefined information stored in the undefined storage unit (see 122 (2) rejection) transmitted is status information and thus McCormick teaches that **said image processing apparatus transmits the information stored in said storage unit to said information processing apparatus** (received by communication driver 1604 and sent to get status module 1603), **in response to a print request from said information processing apparatus or to a request from said information processing apparatus for acquiring the information indicating the function status** (both the control printing module 1601 and the display psw module 1602 request the status of the image

Art Unit: 2624

processing functions that generate the get status module 1603 to do exactly what its name implies, get the status from the image processing device).

Regarding claim 9, which depends from claim 1, Dash teaches that **said image processing functions include a print function for executing printing based on data from said information processing apparatus, a copy function and a facsimile function** (col. 4 lines 33-36 and shown in the Figure menus).

Regarding claim 10, which depends from claim 1, Dash teaches that **said image processing apparatus comprises a print unit for executing printing, and said print is used by one of the plural image processing functions** (printer application; col. 4 line 35, printer 20; type print in Fig. 7).

Regarding claim 16, McCormick teaches **an information processing apparatus for transferring print data by communication with an image processing apparatus** (Fig. 16, communication driver 1604 transfers print data to printer) **for executing an image processing function** (Fig. 1 shows the printer 20, which is known to execute the print image processing function), **the apparatus comprising:**

generation means for generating print data to be transferred to the image processing apparatus (Fig. 16, control printing unit 1601 which takes a print request and generates print data to be sent to the communication driver to be transferred to the printer; col. 8 lines 44-46);

Art Unit: 2624

acquisition means for acquiring, from said image processing apparatus, information indicating the function status image processing functions (get status unit 1603 acquires status information as shown in Fig. 16; col. 8 lines 53-59); and

display control means (1602) for executing a process of transferring the print data generated by said generating means to said image processing apparatus (Fig. 16, the display means 1602 takes in commands via the mouse and executes a process to print the data, including transferring the data to the printer via communications driver 1604, col. 8 line 25, wherein the psw controls the printing of a document, including the transferring to the printer) and displaying the function status of image processing functions on a display unit based on the information acquired by said acquisition means (Fig. 5 is an example of image processing function status that is displayed for the user from display psw 1602 [Fig. 16] based on the acquired status sent from 103 to 1602).

While McCormick teaches a system for reporting status of print jobs, McCormick does not specifically teach the printer device being **multi-functional**, and therefore does not teach **reporting status on multiple functions**.

Dash teaches a **multi-functional device** (col. 2 lines 62-65) **that plural image processing functions can be completed on** (print, fax, copy – see Figs. 8 and 9, where copy and fax functions are demonstrated). Dash further teaches **reporting the status on the plurality of functions** (Figs. 7 and 12).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that improving the functionality of the simple printer of McCormick to the multi-functional device of Dash. The motivations for doing so would have been to allow the user to perform fax, scan, and copy

Art Unit: 2624

functionality. If the multi-functional device of Dash were used in the system of McCormick, the detailed status reporting of all functions would be needed to provide the user with status, which is a key feature of both McCormick and Dash.

Regarding claim 17, which depends from claim 16, the combination teaches that **display control means is capable, based on the information acquired by said acquisition means, of the function status of the plural image processing functions on a single image** (Fig. 7 of Dash shows displaying the function status of the functions in a single image, which would be displayed by the display psw as combined in the system of McCormick) **by graphics, text and animation** (McCormick teaches display screen in Fig. 5 which displays graphics [59], text [55], and animation [57] and in the combined system of Dash and McCormick). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine all of the plural functions of Dash (like status screen Fig. 7) into a status screen of McCormick (like Fig. 5). The motivation for doing so would be to give the user an easy to understand screen (McCormick) and still show all of the information about the device jobs (Dash) in one screen.

Regarding claim 18, which depends from claim 16, the combination further teaches **display control means discriminates, based on the information acquired by said acquisition means,, whether an image processing function of higher priority is executed in said image processing apparatus** (Fig. 7 of Dash shows displaying priority values and Fig. 14 shows a discrimination step [middle step far left] that tests the new status information priority vs. old status information priority for jobs) **and, in case of a discrimination that a processing function of higher priority is executed, displays the function status of the image processing function of such high priority in an emphasized manner** (in the case that a new function has higher

Art Unit: 2624

priority, the steps in the lower left of Fig. 14 teach to display based on priority, thus displaying the items with higher priority emphasized compared to other jobs [higher on the list for example]).

Regarding claim 19, which depends from claim 16, the combination further teaches **display control means displays a text indicating the function status of the image processing function of higher priority in an emphasized manner by a layout in a predetermined area of the display unit** (in the case that a new function has higher priority, the steps in the lower left of Fig. 14 teach to display based on priority, thus displaying the items with higher priority emphasized compared to other jobs [higher on the list for example, which is being laid out in a predetermined area of the display unit]).

Regarding claim 20, which depends from claim 16, Dash teaches **said image processing functions include a print function for executing printing based on data from the information processing apparatus, a copy function and a facsimile function** (col. 4 lines 33-36 and shown in the Figure menus).

Regarding claim 26, the apparatus elements of apparatus claim 16 perform all of the method steps of method claim 26. Therefore, method claim 26 is rejected for the same reasons as rejected apparatus claim 16 above.

Regarding claim 27, which depends from claim 26, the apparatus elements of apparatus claim 17 perform all of the method steps of method claim 27. Therefore, method claim 27 is rejected for the same reasons as rejected apparatus claim 17 above.

Art Unit: 2624

Regarding claim 28, which depends from claim 28, the apparatus elements of apparatus claim 18 perform all of the method steps of method claim 28. Therefore, method claim 28 is rejected for the same reasons as rejected apparatus claim 18 above.

Regarding claim 29, which depends from claim 26, the apparatus elements of apparatus claim 19 perform all of the method steps of method claim 29. Therefore, method claim 29 is rejected for the same reasons as rejected apparatus claim 19 above.

Regarding claim 30, which depends from claim 26, the apparatus elements of apparatus claim 20 perform all of the method steps of method claim 30. Therefore, method claim 30 is rejected for the same reasons as rejected apparatus claim 20 above.

Regarding claims 32 and 37, the method steps of method claim 26 are the same as the program steps of program claim 32 and 37. Further client computer acting as an information processing device in the system of McCormick is well known to have processors and memories for performing program steps. Thus, the steps of program claims 32 and 37 are rejected for the same reasons as discussed in the rejection of method claim 26.

Regarding claims 33 and 38, which depend from 32 and 37, the method steps of method claim 27 are the same as the program steps of program claim 33 and 38. Further client computer acting as an information processing device in the system of McCormick is well known to have processors and memories for performing program steps. Thus, the steps of program claims 33 and 38 are rejected for the same reasons as discussed in the rejection of method claim 27.

Regarding claims 34 and 39, which depend from 32 and 37, the method steps of method claim 28 are the same as the program steps of program claim 34 and 39. Further client computer acting as an information processing device in the system of McCormick is well known to have

Art Unit: 2624

processors and memories for performing program steps. Thus, the steps of program claims 34 and 39 are rejected for the same reasons as discussed in the rejection of method claim 28.

Regarding claims 35 and 40, which depend from 32 and 37, the method steps of method claim 29 are the same as the program steps of program claim 35 and 40. Further client computer acting as an information processing device in the system of McCormick is well known to have processors and memories for performing program steps. Thus, the steps of program claims 35 and 40 are rejected for the same reasons as discussed in the rejection of method claim 29.

Regarding claims 36 and 41, which depend from 32 and 37, the method steps of method claim 30 are the same as the program steps of program claim 36 and 41. Further client computer acting as an information processing device in the system of McCormick is well known to have processors and memories for performing program steps. Thus, the steps of program claims 36 and 41 are rejected for the same reasons as discussed in the rejection of method claim 30.

10. Claim 5 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dash and McCormick as applied to claims 1 and 4 above, and further in view of Ota et al. (US 6785013) hereafter as Ota.

Regarding claim 5, which depends from claim 4, while the combination of Dash and McCormick teaches a printing system with a multi-functional unit with priorities for jobs, the combination of Dash and McCormick does not specifically teach **simultaneously with the emphasized display of the function status of the image processing function of higher priority, suspends the transfer process of the print data to said image processing apparatus.**

Art Unit: 2624

Ota teaches a multi-functional unit 10, status collecting for the device (Fig. 3 between driver 21 and job 25), and **suspending the transfer process of print data for higher priority jobs** (Fig. 7 shows the normal copy job in processing/transferring, and it is suspended/saved in order for the higher priority job to complete [the interrupt copy job]; col. 12 lines 19-61).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that higher priority jobs should be completed first, including the interruption of current jobs as in Ota. The motivation for doing so would be to process jobs according their priority so that if a user needs a job immediately, he not only sees his job at the top of the status display, but the job also gets taken care of immediately as well, thus the nature of high priority.

11. Claims 13 & 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yoshida as applied to claims 11 & 21 above, and further in view of well known prior art.

Regarding claim 13, which depends from claim 11, while Yoshida teaches informing the client machine via informing means (53, see also client screen in Fig. 12), Yoshida does not specifically teach sending status after **a client request for information indicating the function status**.

However, Examiner takes Official Notice that **a client requests for information indicating the function status** is well known in the prior art.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to allow the user to issue requests for status in the system of Yoshida. The motivation for doing so would be to allow the user access to information about their jobs at any time. Thus, the user can make decisions about the job. For example, a user checks a job they needed to have printed and sends a request. It

Art Unit: 2624

comes back and it has not been printed yet. This allows the user to cancel the first job and send the job to another printer that can print the job sooner. Other motivations for keeping a client informed on the status of print jobs would have been well known in the art.

Regarding claim 23, which depends from claim 21, the apparatus elements of apparatus claim 13 perform all of the method steps of method claim 23. Therefore, method claim 23 is rejected for the same reasons as rejected apparatus claim 13 above.

Conclusion

12. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

US-5669040, Hisatake, 9-16-1999: teaches image forming apparatus capable of altering a job content and job content altering method which includes plural processing functions, status reporting, priorities of functions, and displaying all in one screen **(applicant is further pointed towards Figs. 1, 2, 7, 8, 11, 14, 16 24, 25, and 26).**

US-6618163, Roosen et al., 9-9-2003: teaches a system and method for symbolically displaying printer status information.

US-6504627, Matsumoto, 1-7-2003: image processing device with plural processing functions, priorities of functions, status reporting, and management in memory of the acquired information (see Fig. 5).

Art Unit: 2624

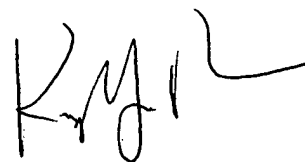
13. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lucas Divine whose telephone number is 703-306-3440. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 7:30am - 5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Moore can be reached on 703-308-7452. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Lucas Divine
Examiner
Art Unit 2624

ljd


KING Y. POON
PRIMARY EXAMINER